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HISTORICAL PIECES.



THE
KEEPING OF THE VOW,
AND OTHER VERSES.

BY
H. T. MACKENZIE BELL.



LONDON:
ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.
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HUBERT.

Scene I.—The garden of a Manor House on a summer evening.

Dramatis Personæ.—Sir Ralph Harton, a frail widower ;
Hubert, his only child, in opening manhood.

Time.—Immediately after the breaking out of the Civil War, 1642.

Hubert. HURRAH ! at length the people spring
To vindicate their right,
And vainly now shall strive the King
To vanquish them in fight.
At last Laud's long despotic course
Draws ruin in its train,
Soon Hampden's words of frenzied force
The victory shall gain—
While Charles will rue with deep remorse
The part which he hath ta'en.
For England's might shall rise in fight
Throughout the groaning land—
And War's harsh sound be heard around
Our homes on every hand.
Our wrongs shall be wiped out in gore,
We'll vanquish what was vaunted,
And so it shall be said once more
That Britons are undaunted.

Then shall we hold a Parliament

Untrammelled, true, and free ;

The Stuart's line will aye repent

Their deeds of tyranny.

Secret cabals shall not affright,

Nor unordained taxation—

And life will prove a dear delight

To each one in the nation !

Sir Ralph. And yet, my son, this coming strife

Will yield us grievous woe ;

Though risking life where death is rife,

God grant you ne'er may know.

The agony a father feels,

When from his fond child parted—

Wounds such as these Time seldom heals,

But leaves him broken-hearted ;

What anguish 'tis to separate,

When Nature's ties are nearest ;

Ah ! cruel is the withering fate

Which tears me from my dearest.

Still go, my son, nor lingering stay,

All private wishes must give way

When the public weal in a righteous cause

Demands a defence for our ancient laws.

Yet even when the cause is one

To which my thoughts respond,

How hard it seems to lose thee, son !

I long to gaze beyond

The darkness which enshrouds thy lot
Amid the surging strife—
Of Gertrude, Hubert, think'st thou not ?
Gertrude, thy promised wife.
Her father hastes with all his men,
To take the monarch's side,
Will he permit his daughter then
To be a traitor's bride ?

Hubert. Lately on evening calm as this
We met in woodland yonder,
Sealing our troth with fervent kiss,
Knowing we had grown fonder ;
Yet 'twas our lot to ponder
On what, alas ! we now must do :
So sadly passed our interview,
Feeling it was our parents' due
That we, at least, should meet no more
Until the present strife was o'er.
And thus our pressing grief we strove to
smother,
By vowing constant faith to one another.
So still to me is Gertrude dear,
We do not part for ever ;
Then father mine, thy spirit cheer,
Though now we're forced to sever.

Scene II.—A room in the Manor House. Hubert and Gertrude alone.

Time.—Three years afterwards.

Hubert. Alas ! my honoured father dead,
A blighting blow indeed has sped
When I was absent ; Gertrude, love,
Thou seem'st a being from above
Sent to relieve my crushing woe,
By bliss which mortals rarely know.
Few words may tell why I am here,
In thy dear face delighting,
Blessed be the cause which brings thee near,
Our severed ties uniting.
How weary is this woeful time,
Of pillaging and slaughter !
No party deeming war a crime,
Blood flowing fast as water.
The golden grain one rarely sees,
That all are now requiring,
Few buds upon the orchard trees,
Which ruthless foes are firing ;
Shrieks of despair borne by the breeze
Whence peasants are retiring.
The hurried tramp of armed men,
The musketry's rude rattle,
The cries and imprecations when
Amid the brunt of battle.

Such are the sounds which greet mine ear,
Till, saddened with the fray,
I come, my love, to rest me here,
If only for a day.

Gertrude. My story too is very brief,
But 'tis a tale of truest grief.
Ah! Hubert I felt lone and drear,
When thou went'st forth to fight the foe,
And none were left my soul to cheer
Along its path of loveless woe.
The links seemed loosed which brightly bound
Our hopes and hearts in love profound.
My father grew morose and stern,
And harshly swore that I should learn
My folly thus to thwart his will
By loving a rebel Round-head still.
And that he would go forth and bring
For me another lover—
Who dauntlessly would serve the King,
As I should soon discover.
While thus beset on every side,
With none to counsel or to guide—
I scarce knew what I ought to do,
Then to Sir Harton's house I flew
Craving protection there :
And graciously with features pale
He gravely listened to my tale,
Granting me all my prayer.

He let me take a daughter's part—
Loving me dearly from his heart :
But feebler grew he day by day,
Dreaming of thee who wert away,
Endangerd in the deadly fray ;
And oft he longed as erst of yore
To mount his stately steed once more
To join thee in the field.

But lacking strength, "Heaven's will be done,
Though strong the yearning for my son,
Whom God protect and shield."

I need not tell thee how his strength
Stole stealthily away : at length
He knew that death was near,
And like a wan and sickly child,
By sleep when blissfully beguiled,
He died without a fear.

Hubert. Thanks, Gertrude darling, for thy care.

Ah, had I but been near to share
Thy deep devotion to my sire,
It had been more mine own desire,
Than that by deeds of might my name
Should win in war a soldier's fame.
This is no time for honeyed word,
Yet what from thy sweet lips I've heard
Hath bid me bless and love thee more
Than in the peaceful days of yore.
But, Gertrude, I must leave thee now—

I may no longer tarry ;
For I my good steed must allow
Three hours in which to carry
His master unto his command,
Of Levellers the nighest band.
The struggle now is nearly done,
With Cromwell none can cope—
When a great conflict has been won
Gone is each Royal hope.
Thy sire and mother are in Spain,
(Having in safety crossed the main).
Then with my vassals still abide,
Nor from my home depart—
Until I come to call thee bride
With blithely beating heart.
Oh ! give me now a last embrace,
One glance of thy bright eye
Will nerve me aught on earth to face,
E'en though it be to die.

Scene III.—Interior of a wretched hovel. Hubert lying wounded. Group of soldiers.

Time.—A few days later.

1st Sol. 'Tis sad our Captain too should feel
The stroke of the Malignants' steel,
In fight so fearless, brave, and bold,
He scarcely seemed of mortal mould ;

And yet among the wounded he
Would tender as a woman be.
The dying heard with joy his tread,
Invoking blessings on his head.
So kind to all, so gentle too,
He gave to each his proper due.
And ever exercised his power,
To check us in a wanton hour.

2nd Sol. Cease, ere he wakes—

Hubert. (*Opening his eyes—*)

“Why am I here,

In this abode so bare and drear?
Why this strange mist before mine eyes,
Whence phantoms of the past arise?
Why this weak trembling of the frame,
And feelings which I cannot name?

1st Sol. Thou’rt wounded, Captain, but we feel,
Assured our leech thy hurt can heal.

Hubert. Never more, my race is run,

Here I shall not long remain,

All my life on earth is done—

Save, perchance, some hours of pain.

(*Delirious.*) Gertrude, darling, come to me,

Even ’mid the din of strife.

When shall I the dear day see,

When I rapturous call thee wife?

(*Again he is conscious.*)

Approach, my men, I grow more weak,
My strength speeds swift away,
Then promise me while yet I speak,
My mandate to obey.

When I am dead, with charger fleet
Unto my home repair,

And tell the lady Gertrude sweet,
My last thoughts were of her.

And lay me where my fathers sleep,
Within yon lone churchyard,

Where the weird willow seems to keep
A solitary guard.

Farewell! I thank you from my heart
For all the kindness on your part,
May God ———

1st Sol. See the celestial light

Illume his features, as his spirit takes its flight.

THE BATTLE OF LOUDONHILL.

JUNE 1ST, 1679.


The Scottish Presbyterians, forbidden by the arbitrary enactments of Charles II. to hold religious services according to their much-cherished manner, were fain to do so in secret. Graham of Claverhouse, afterwards Earl of Dundee, has earned immortal infamy by the cruelties he exercised while dispersing these assemblies with his troopers. It is one of those occasions which is here attempted to be described.

I.

'Tis Sabbath morn—fair Nature's face
Showers smiles of freshly glowing grace
On mountain, crag, and glen,—
As if to prove to Him above
Its silent share of lowly love
Amid proud sullen men :
And blithely birds chant loud their lays
Of adoration and of praise.

II.

Much people from around are here,
Yet with a mien of awe and fear,—
But oft their faces seem to cheer
As though some blessed boon were near.
Women and men of every class
Are gathering densely on the grass,
Their differences made void ;
Resolved whate'er may come to pass
Their rights be not destroyed.



III.

“ Have ye heard of that rash raid
Ruthless Claverhouse has made ? ”
Thus in accents firm yet low
Oft they murmur to and fro—
“ He has ta'en of us the best,
But he shall not seize the rest—
Until at least we struggle sore
To hold our own in fight ;
And pray amid the conflict's roar
‘ For Scotland and the right.’ ”

IV.

“ Why should the King dictate to us
An alien way to serve the Lord ?
We will not bear such thrall, and thus
Are met this day with one accord ;
Place sentinels on every hill
To give us all fit warning due :
Then put good trust in God's wise will
And in our cause and weapons true.”

V.

“ If our sweet sisters see the sign
Of danger passed along the line
Of distant scouts, they quit the glen,—
The strife not left to craven men.”

So speaks a patriarch in the midst, and now
The congregation at God's footstool bow :
And with united voices humbly there
They plead for pardon and for peace in prayer.

VI.

Then plaintively they sing a psalm,
And hear the "Word of Life ;"
Yet bodes around a baneful calm
Presaging coming strife.
For see ! there hastes a messenger,
Of toil-worn form but dauntless air :
"Look to your ranks, rouse ye like men,—
The black dragoons have gained the glen."

VII.

Full speedily the men divide
In companies, on either side
According to their arms ;
A motley host indeed they seem,
As now the Sun's meridian beam
Makes scythes and mattocks burnished gleam,
Among the weapons warriors deem
Fitted for war's alarms.

VIII.

The aged minister with head made bare
Amid a solemn silence offers prayer ;

“ Lord spare the green and take the ripe; we know
Thou rulest all things in this world of woe;
Then grant but this and Scotland’s just demand,
Aught else we leave in Thy Almighty Hand.”

IX.

The pleading ends: each peasant hies
His proper place to fill:
Along their front a marsh there lies—
Behind their post a hill.
While resolutely thus they tread,
Of father, mother, wife,
Doubtless they think, yet dare the dread
And danger of the strife,
Feeling its issue will restore
Freedom to their down-trodden shore.

X.

Lo! list to the sound which now bursts on the ear,
A sound that full oft hath begotten wild fear—
The prelude to plunder and rapine and woe,
As all in the bold little army well know.
Pricking swift as the billows when ploughed
by the gale,
While their steeds spurn the turf as they dash
up the vale,
The dragoons are seen moving, and every man
Views the dark crest of Claverhouse leading
the van.

XI.

"Now look to your carbines," cries he with a laugh—
"And each ranting rebel you'll scatter like chaff,
The harvest is over, the reapers are come,
With swords for their flails, for their music
a drum,
And our famous leech-craft will certainly heal
The festering wound of the Covenant's zeal."

XII.

Sharp comes the volley—from the vale
Shrouded in sable smoke
Strange sounds arise; and when a wail
Pierces its cloud-wrapt cloak,
Perchance it is a sign that one
Ends there his earthly strife—
His lowly race at last hath run,
Entering eternal life.
Perchance a sign that one of those
Who scoffed and had no fear,
His summons come—reluctant goes
Before God to appear.

XIII.

Yet still the peasants, ne'er o'erthrown,
With patient courage hold their own:

Try as they may the soldiers see
They win not thus the victory :
So Claverhouse recalls each man
Till he direct some further plan,—
The lines upon his stubborn face
Showing he feels the dire disgrace
That well-tried troops—false Charles's boast—
Should vanquished be by peasant host.

XIV.

But soon enraged he orders all
The cavalry within his call
Full at the charge with frenzied force
Across the moss to take their course ;
Seeking to make the rout complete
By crushing all beneath their feet.
And gallantly the men advance
With spear in rest, and glittering lance,
• And crests which in the sun-beams dance.

XV.

But every effort is in vain,
And steeds though guided by the rein
Are all around fast falling :
And their fierce foemen now are closing
Thick in upon them, and opposing :
Their ranks now past recalling—

The marsh has stopped their march indeed
There can be no denying,
And many a man and many a steed
Dyed darkly now lie dying.
And all their splendour melts away
Like dewdrops at the dawn of day.
Where once were men, they are no more—
Nought save a mass of mingled gore.

XVI.

Like as a vulture when bereft of prey
Long hovers ere it baffled soars away,
Stern Claverhouse had waited thus in vain ;
Till now he turns his rampant charger's rein,
Shouting, in his rough voice the loud command,
"Retreat," unto the remnant of his band.

XVII.

And thus the victory is won,
And many hearts made glad—
Yet grieving that a Sabbath's sun
Should see a sight so sad.
And well they know they have not broke
The rigour of the Despot's yoke,
And oft they pause and ponder wearily,
On what must hap ere Scotland can be free.

XVIII.

Loudon! thy fame shall ne'er be lost,
E'en if it only showed the cost
Our Fathers paid for Liberty,
That priceless jewel of the free:
Thus nerving us with effort strong
To combat Tyranny and Wrong.

—:O:—

THE KEEPING OF THE VOW.

1330.

KING ROBERT BRUCE is dying, uncertain comes
his breath,
And the last strife for failing life will soon be
won by death,
Around his couch the courtiers stand, and heave
full many a sigh,
In dire dismay and grief are they to see their
monarch die.

"Sir James of Douglas, come!" he cries, thou
ever wert my friend,
And though we part, 'tis well thou art with me
unto the end.
When in great straits, I vowed to God if He
would grant to me
That War should cease in perfect peace, and
Scotland should be free,

His blessed banner I would bear to sacred
Palestine,

With arms to quell the Infidel: such my supreme
design.

And grieved am I that here I lie, life ebbing fast
away,

This gnawing pain now proving vain the hope
my vow to pay.

Then promise me right faithfully, when I am
laid at rest,

That with my heart thou wilt depart to do my
last behest!"

"I pledge my knightly word, my liege, thy
bidding shall be done,

And though so sad, yet am I glad such favour to
have won!

Safe in my bosom shall thy trust abide with me
for ever,

Unless perchance in peril's hour, 'twere best that
we should sever."

The king smiles faintly in reply—then gently
falls his head,

And on his grand old follower's breast bold
Robert Bruce lies dead.


With pennons gay and proud array doth Douglas
then depart,

And in a casket carefully he keeps the kingly Heart.

Crossing the main and sighting Spain, he hears
of that wild war
Which Moor and Christian long have waged
with ceaseless conflict sore ;
Forthwith he deems that here it seems his mis-
sion first should be,
And with his host soon swells the boast of
Spanish chivalry.
The armies twain on Tebas's* plain extend—a
splendid sight !
In armour dight with weapons bright, impatient
for the fight ;
The summer sunbeams on the shields of warriors
brave are glancing,
And o'er the plain spurs many a man with
charger proudly prancing,
Whose gallant crest, stirred by the breeze, full
gaily now is dancing,
While each Moslem there with scimitar, upon
his Arab horse,
Moves with a calm courageous mien, unswerving
in his course :
And thus at length the stately strength the
Cross and Crescent wield,
As deadly foes now darkly close upon this fatal
field.

* On the borders of Andalusia.

The Spaniards' stroke hath bravely broke the
dense opposing line !
Yet none the less both armies press around their
standard-sign,
And though many a Paynim late so proud lies
lifeless on the plain,
While good Castilian jennet's seen unguided by
the rein.
First in the van the Douglas rides, with all his
men-at-arms,—
A valiant company they are, inured to war's
alarms,
The veterans of a hundred fields, for whom it
had its charms,—
With spur and rein they onward strain on the
retreating foe,
And in the chase can scarcely trace the road by
which they go,
Till, looking back upon their track, with horror
now they see
The ranks opposed once more have closed—they
are in jeopardy !
"We find full late the danger great," Sir Douglas
cries. "Return !
And charge the foe like Scots who know the
rout at Bannockburn ;
Surely the men who vanquished then vain
Edward's vast array



No caitiff Moor can e'er o'ercome on this victorious day!"

Thus speaking, swift he turns his steed, and gallops to the rear,

'Mid battle's tide his dauntless ride as gallant doth appear,

As the swimmer's strife who strives for life, yet feels no craven fear,

And as they passed the blows fell fast : stern was the conflict wild,

With steeds and men, who ne'er again would rise, the field was piled.

Yet Douglas true, with still a few, have almost cut their way

With wondrous force — resistless — straight through the grim array,

When glancing quickly round, he sees, still struggling in the fight,

The noble Walter St. Clair, a very valiant knight.


They oft were nigh in days gone by, on many a bloody field,

And oft had they in tourney gay their chargers swiftly wheeled,—

"Ride to the rescue!" Douglas shouts, "dash on and do not spare,

To save yon matchless comrade which of you will not dare!"

Urging his horse with headlong force, he rushes
to his aid,
And many a tunic's fold is cleft by his resistless
blade;
Yet he is left of friends bereft—fierce foemen all
around,
And 'mid the roar of mortal strife of succour not
a sound.
Now snatches he the jewelled casque in which
the Heart reposes,
('Twas strange to see how lovingly his hand
upon it closes.)
And flings it forward 'mong the foe around him,
with the cry,
"Press on, brave Heart, as thou wert wont: I
follow thee or die!"
With lifted lance he makes advance to where
his treasure fell,
Each crash of blow—now fast, now slow—like
a rude requiem knell,
And left alone, yet ne'er o'erthrown, he grapples
with the foe,
Until a sword-thrust piercing him at last doth
lay him low:
Then gallantly he fights a while, half-kneeling
on the plain,
And there, exhausted by his wounds, he finally
is slain.



So died this grand old hero! In Douglas Kirk
he sleeps,
While History the record proud of his achieve-
ments keeps.

—:O:—

AN EPISODE IN THE BATTLE OF
FUENTES D'HONORE.

1811.

THE horse of the armies, in hostile array,
Haste to prove their proud prowess in mortal
affray—
And the soldiers' fierce oaths that are bandied
around
Add a fresh sense of horror to battle's stern
sound:
Thus the squadrons are nearing each other,
when lo!
An hussar leaves our line and makes straight for
the foe.
And stung by his tauntings to furious force
Direct at one soldier he urges his horse—
Who, seeing such frenzy of hate with sore fear,
Set spurs to his steed, and swift speeds for the rear,
While the other his charger gives rashly the rein,
And both gallop recklessly over the plain,

24 *Episode in the Battle of Fuentes d'Honore.*

Our men greet their comrade with cheers long
and loud,

While the French are struck mute as he flies
through their crowd ;

So the chase is continued far, far, in advance
Of the glancing of bayonet or glittering of lance ;
Yet our gallant hussar is in perilous plight,
The enemy near him—no friends now in sight :
And to reach his companions perforce he must go
Through the densely-ranged ranks of the furious
foe—

Who, deeming their victory a certainty, vow
Though he passed their line once he will not
pass it now.

And hard they press on him—escape seems in
vain,

Though he spur his steed onward with loose
slackened rein.

But the men of his regiment are anxious to save
A comrade, though reckless, thus daring and
brave ;

So, drawing their sabres, swift forward they dash
And charge on the cowards with crest-cleaving
crash.

Thus the moment which seemed his sad fate to
have sealed,

A goodly array of our soldiers revealed,

And amid the mad melée of general strife
He regained his companions with honour and
life.

—:0:—

AN EPISODE AFTER THE TAKING OF
BADAJOZ.

1812.

THE sun, reluctant, rises o'er a field
Heaped high with corses, ghastly in their gore,
Where Horror holds her court and reigns supreme
Whilst revelling in the scene. A woman wends
Her weary way, and wildly views the slain,
Powerless to doubt, yet dreading to be sure
Of what may prove her loss.

She has a babe
Clasped firmly to her breast, while at her side,
Held by the hand, there walks her first-born son.
Alas! she pauses by a prostrate form,
Which fascinates her gaze; then hesitates
In sore suspense and torture. Till at length,
Raising the fallen man, she marks the face.
It is her husband's features! Then a wail
Of awful anguish rends the silent air,
And, sinking on her knees upon the sward,
She is convulsed in speechless agony.

Thus moments pass, until the child who clings
Close to the woman's raiment lifts his head,
And softly murmurs, "Mother !" Then when sobs
Appear his sole response, he loudly cries,
"Oh, mother, speak to me ; do speak to me ;
Is this my father lying thus so still ?
I'll wake him for you." Seizing the cold hand,
He seeks to raise it, but, with awe-struck fear,
He looses swift his hold. "'Tis icy cold,
It's weight like lead."

Then suddenly she starts,
And in despairing accents thus exclaims—
"My God, my heart will burst ! I cannot cry ;
My brain is burning, yet my heart seems hard.
I used to grieve when I displeased him ; now,
When he is gone, I cannot shed a tear !
Oh, my poor children, what will come of you,
Left in this weary wilderness of woe,
Lonely and friendless in a foreign land !"

—:0:—

DEVOTION OF PRINCE PONIATOWSKI.

LEIPSIC, 1813.

BRAVELY the French have fought, but all by
treachery is lost,
And nought is left save to retreat, though now
at fearful cost ;

In gloomy tones Napoleon gives the unfamiliar word—

With curses on the enemy it everywhere is heard ;

“And you, Prince Poniatowski, keep the Southern
Faubourg, while

Across the Pleisse and Elster the vanguard can
defile.”

“My men are few, your Majesty, they must in
time give way.”

“Still you will surely strive to hold the post as
best you may.”

“Doubt us not, sire, we'll keep good guard,”
speaks he with a deep sigh.

“None of my Polish legion, but for you would
gladly die.”

The morning light soon growing bright shows
clearly to the foe

The French retreat has now commenced though
strangely sad and slow ;

Then columns of the allies advance to do their
duty

By dashing on to devastate a scene once filled
with beauty ;

But gallantly their rushing ranks the grand rear-
guard restrain,

Full long their valiant charge is vain an entrance
to obtain,

And when, but step by step, the bold defenders
are retiring,
'Tis whilst resisting steadfastly with still continued firing;
All their companions now have crossed a broad
bridge which is mined—
If they can pass securely o'er they soon may
safety find.

Hark, to the sudden hellish crash ! these heroes'
hope has gone !
The mine has prematurely burst—the careless
stream rolls on ;
The people fire from off the roofs, the foe press
on the rear,
A moment 'tis of agony, of overwhelming fear.
Proud Poniatowski sees the flash of hostile sabres
rise,
And to his Polish cuirassiers, he petulantly
cries—
“'Tis best to fall with honour now while each
his weapon plies.”

Turning his horse, he shapes his course 'mong
bayonets all opposing,
Around his stalwart martial form the enemy are
closing—

One shot has smote him in the arm, another
 'midst his dress,
Striking the gay insignia which his great renown
 express ;
He plunges madly through the Peisse, the
 strength at his command
Is perfectly exhausted ere he feebly gains the
 land ;
Alas ! 'tis but to mark the foe thronging the
 Elster's shore,
And leaping swift into its tide he sinks to rise
 no more.

Farewell, lost Poland's noble son ! how meet
 the day would be
Whereon the land which gave thee birth once
 more was rendered free.

—:0:—

ADMIRAL HOPSON'S FIRST EXPLOIT.*

THE dawning light
Hath banished Night,
And Ocean lieth calm—
Yet all around
Is heard the sound
Of war and wild alarm.

* Vide *Sea Fights*, page 73.

The Dutch and we
Are met at sea
On this sweet summer day ;
At direful length
To try our strength
In battle's bloody fray.

See ! on the right
Two ships in fight
Are struggling long and hard ;
And though so near
They know not fear
Close grappling yard to yard.

With eager joy
An orphan boy
Speaks 'mid the battle's roar—
"Since morning's sun
The fight has run ;
Oh, when will it be o'er ?"

"It will not lag
Until his flag
The foe at last pulls down ;
Along our line
That is a sign
Of conquest and renown."

“ If thus it be,
Then swift,” quoth he
With brightly flashing eye ;
“ ’Twill soon be past,
Nor longer last,
Though if I fail I die.”

Hid by the cloak
Of sable smoke,
Full noiselessly he goes ;
Nor does he wait,
But springs elate
Among our fiercest foes.

And up their mast
He clammers fast
And gains his precious prize ;
Then from aloft
He glides down soft,
In glad and gallant guise.

And through the roar
He bounds once more
To his appointed place ;
Calmly serene
Was now his mien,
And noble looked his face.

Our men with glee
Shout "Victory!"
Waving the standard gay;
And from each gun
The Dutchmen run
In wonder and dismay.

And while their chief
Seeks, wild with grief,
To rally them in vain,
Our sailors board
With one accord,
And soon the vessel gain.

And of the youth
Who thus, in truth,
Had won a worthy name,
Men spoke aloud
In accents proud,
And world-wide was his fame.

DEATH OF CAPTAIN HUNT.*

JAN. 8TH, 1761.

THE bold crew of the *Unicorn* discern at dawn
of light,
Their longing is fulfilled at length—they see the
foe in sight.
Full swiftly now the order comes with speed to
give them chase,
Our captain knows the French are lost if we can
gain the race.

Hurrah! the dastard's flight is vain, the vessels
drawing nigh,
Each man with eager hope prepares to vanquish
or to die.
And soon the cannon's ruthless roar is rolling
all around,
For two fierce hours with fiendish hate is heard
its hellish sound ;
Strange scene of wild delirious joy, yet desolating
woe,
For now a shot our captain strikes, and he is
borne below.

* See *Battles of the British Navy*, vol. i., p. 210.

Two seamen bear him softly down, and bleeding
sore he lies,
While carefully to bind his wound the skilful
surgeon tries.
The strife ne'er stays—the bearers bring another
blood-stained man.
“Surgeon,” at once the captain speaks, “Go,
save him if you can.
My wound is mortal; thus for me your efforts
kind are vain ;
Not so with him; then use your power to miti-
gate his pain.
Nay, murmur not, but meetly now obey my
last behest ;
God soon shall soothe my sufferings where ‘the
weary are at rest.’”

Alas! how soon the span of life which to him
still remained
Stole swift away; yet ah! 'twas well he con-
sciousness retained,
For in a while his heart grew glad when we had
won the day—
His grandest earthly guerdon—ere his spirit
sped away.
Hero! as filled with thoughtful love, as thou
wert true and brave,
Receive in heaven thy rich reward from Him
who died to save.

DUTY STRONGER THAN PAIN.*

1795.

THE good ship *Rose* with thirteen men and but
eight guns is steering
Along the gay Italian coast, in quest of pri-
vateering,
When at the breaking of the day before upon
the lee
What gallantly they long have sought at last
they gladly see.
Three armed feluccas are in view and soon begins
the fight,
And the ruthless *Rose* her broadside fires with
overwhelming might,
For valiantly her noble crew with vigour ply
each gun,
When suddenly a shot lays low of their small
number, one ;
His foot is crushed, and eager hands would bear
him from the deck,
But with a voice which falters not he seeks their
care to check—
“ I shall not leave you comrades, bold,” heroically
he cries,
“ For I can use a musket still, although I cannot
rise ;

* See *Battles of the British Navy*, vol. i., p. 424.

Then to your posts, nor think of me, our numbers
are too few
To spare e'en one, and readily my duty I can do."
The battle rages bravely on, and soon 'tis clear
to see
That gallantly our doughty men have gained
the victory—
And was it aught of wonder that so it should be
when
Such fearless hearts impelled the hands of our
staunch sailors then?
God grant that if once more our tars should fight
upon the wave,
They may be then as free from fear, as dauntless,
and as brave.

—:0:—

A SEA ENCOUNTER.

1758.

THE gallant ships *Southampton* and *Melampe*
brave the gale
In noble guise, as mutually they forth together
sail,
With massive mast bent to the blast, and canvas
full and free,
A stirring sight they seem—befitting well an
English sea—

With many blithesome hearts on board as heed-
less and as gay
As if Life were merely made for mirth—nought
save a holiday.

And now behold off Yarmouth roads there bursts
upon their sight,
Two Gallic frigates in full sail, which they re-
solve to fight.
The *Melampe* is the swifter barque, and fastest
gains the foe,
Who to return her fusilade with interest are not
slow—
So ere the crew of the *Southampton* reach the
strife, they learn
In a distressed disabled state she has been forced
astern ;
Then, like a dastard, one French ship in dread
doth steer away,
But madly the *Southampton's* guns upon the
other play
Like monsters of destruction, who cannot brook
delay.

The French engage with reckless rage—the fight
grows hour by hour ;
Each vessel's crew, with purpose true, striving
with passion's power ;

Each seaman seeking still to keep the honour of
his nation
By carrying, 'mid the hostile ranks, dire woe and
desolation ;
And the hissing roar of rushing shell, and the
blinding red-hot hail,
All demonstrate what dreadful force they now
use to prevail.
Hour after hour thus passes swift in unremitting
strife,
And of the French full eighty men have yielded
up their life—
But as the sixth hour draweth on they suddenly
give way,
Their falling flag proclaiming wide that they
have lost the day.

We trust such times as these shall ne'er again
mar Britain's story,
Yet bravery howe'er displayed shall aye retain
its glory.



SONGS.

NO SUN EVER ROSE WITHOUT
SETTING.

No sun ever rose without setting,
At eve giving place to the night ;
No night ever stayed but begetting
The dawn it departed in light.

No joy ever came without bringing
Some shade to remind us of grief,—
To sorrow there ever is clinging
A something to render relief.

There's nought on the Earth but containeth
A power its effects to efface,
And therefore in Life there remaineth
For grief and rejoicing a place.

Then gird on the armour of Gladness
To combat Despair with true scorn,
And live through thy night-time of sadness
In hope of the glories of morn.

UNFULFILLED YEARNINGS.

When Summer's sweetest influence
Is shed o'er plain and hill,
And Nature gains her recompense
For working Winter's will,
We feel a void—a weary sense
Of something wanting still.

In Autumn when each searing leaf
With sorrow aye is fraught,
And every garnered golden sheaf
Yields fruit for saddest thought—
We feel a void—our spirits' grief
For something vainly sought.

When Winter with his ice-cold hand
Grasps giant-like the ground,
And stiff and stark lies all the land
In frost's firm fetters bound,—
We feel a void—we understand
'Tis something still unfound.

When Spring returns with fairest face,
Filling the earth with song—
And gladness seems in every place,
And love and life are strong,—
Ah, me! e'en then we fail to trace
The dream for which we long.

THE LATE AUTUMN IS DYING.

THE late Autumn is dying,
Dead leaves strew the land—
Signs of sorrow now lying
On every hand ;
While I walk full of sadness
In garden once fair,
And where erst all was gladness,
I find trouble there.

In a hedge-row wind-shaken
To wildest unrest,
Forlorn and forsaken,
I see a bird's nest,—
Its soft down decaying—
Its fledgings all flown,—
Nought save the shell staying,
Deserted and lone.

Then the thought came swift cleaving
The depths of my mind—
Soon, we too, must be leaving
Our loved homes behind,—
The drear tomb will enclose us,
Life's pilgrimage o'er,—
“And the place that now knows us,
Shall know us no more.”

GLAD DREAMS OF THE FUTURE COME
O'ER US.

GLAD dreams of the Future come o'er us,
All radiantly-spotless and bright,
And bid us look up—for before us
Are vistas of boundless delight.

O come when our bosoms are weary,
Life-burdened and longing for rest,
And point through the darkness so dreary
To a land which by sunlight is blest.

O come when the world hath been gaining
O'er our souls an insidious sway,—
Our fickle rash footsteps restraining
From wandering out of the way.

O come, that o'er all of Earth's changes
Your light as a guide may be shed,
Whether like unto others, or strange is,
The path that in Life we must tread.

And when finished at length is Life's story,
Completed its words and its acts—
Then burst on our sight in your glory,
Not as *dreams*, but *immutable facts*.

A SONG OF HOPE.

THE vinery's foliage
In Autumn grows sere,
For its wealth of bright beauty
Fades out with the year :
All its branches, where lately
Grape clusters were spread,
Become barren and sapless
And seem as though dead.

But long ere the soft Spring
Clothes the land in glad green,
On its boughs beauteous blossoms
Are lavishly seen ;
As it uses the warmth
Which is placed in its power,
And so rallies more swiftly
From Winter's rude hour.

Thus if we, when some sorrow
O'erwhelming appears,
And which threatens to banish
The light of our years ;

Would the blessings still left
 In our service employ,
 Then whate'er be the issue,
 'Twould bring us but joy.

—:o:—

HOW OFT ARISE TO SOOTHE OUR WOE.

How oft arise to soothe our woe,
 And dissipate our sadness,—
 Fond dreams of faces long ago
 When life was love and gladness.
 Like,* yet unlike the lights that guide
 The storm-tossed o'er the ocean,
 They in our secret souls abide,
 Cherished with deep devotion.

The halcyon Past seems to possess,
 When we review its story,
 One radiance of happiness
 Nor cloud to dim its glory:—
 So ah, 'tis well, when lonely lies
 Life's pathway girt with sorrow,
 That sometimes visions fair should rise
 Which from our Past we borrow.

* *Like*, because they lead us on to joy. *Unlike*, because they are ever with us, and not as a beacon, having their influence felt merely at one spot of our voyage.

SONG.

THE PURITAN'S FAREWELL TO HIS BETROTHED, 1642.

SHE—

WHEN gladly long ago my heart
Was given to thy keeping,
I never thought that we might part
In anguish or in weeping.
Then wherefore cause this wanton woe—
Such lavish love betraying—
E'en though harsh duty bids thee go,
Thy faction's call obeying?

HE—

Nay, speak not so, my peerless love,
Fond words the truth perverting;
Wouldst thou not have me proved above,
A wretch his post deserting?
And if on earth we meet no more,
When now in grief we sever,
We'll surely greet on that Bright Shore
Where all is bliss for ever.

There, when each feeling is confessed,
Thou'lt know my crushing sorrow—
The burning pangs which pierced my breast
Ere leaving thee to-morrow.

Lo, listen to the distant chime,
To us a note of sadness ;
Then let us spend our little time
In calm if not in gladness.

SHE (*after a pause*)—
Right, darling, thou must rush to arms,
Destroying dreams of staying ;
I'll strive to soothe my heart's alarms
By patience and by praying.

—:o:—

SONG.

THERE is happiness, dearest—
True happiness here,—
Though the troubles thou fearest
Perchance may appear :
For 'mid every emotion
Of weal or of woe,
Our depths of devotion
No respite shall know.

Yes,—in Life's twisted tissue
Of gladness and grief,
Love—whate'er be the issue
Still renders relief :

So there's happiness, dearest—
True happiness here,—
Though the troubles thou fearest
Perchance may appear.

—:o:—

TWILIGHT MEMORIES.

How once I loved the twilight hour
Of Summer's blissful day,
While watching from each leafy bower
The daylight die away,—
And clasping in mine own, the hand
Of one I loved the best,
Whose converse soothed, as the sight of land
Doth mariners distressed.

Right bravely he had borne his part
In Earth's incessant strife,
Still labouring on with dauntless heart
Amid the ills of Life.
Had known adversity and pain,—
Hopes blighted—bitter wrong,—
Yet all to sour his soul were vain,
In Heaven-born strength 'twas strong.

And oft he talked of his vanished years
In the gentle gloaming tide,
Bidding me all my joys and fears
Implicitly confide.

And wisely would my future trace,
Then leaving things of Time,
In raptured tones and with upturned face
Would speak of themes sublime.

His, that strange wordless eloquence,
So oft a wondrous power,
Which sways the soul with a force intense
In the calm of such an hour.
And when I walk where shadows steal
O'er Summer's fairy view—
I never, never fail to feel
That influence anew.

—:o:—

A WINTRY MOOR AT NIGHT.

My way led o'er a wintry waste
When evening shades were falling,
And the soft sheep-bells rung in haste
The fleecy flocks were calling,—
For still a few had strayed afield
To wander mid the heather,
Seeking the food the hill-sides yield
Despite such withering weather.

Chorus. A wintry moor ! A wintry moor !
Alone at dark of night,
Where in the world may one procure
More desolate a sight ?

Black barren rocks were on the right,
Uprising bleak and lone,
Like the fabled forms of men of might
Fast petrified to stone.
And far and wide on every side,
The mazy mist extended,
Slowly its mass did upwards glide,
Till with the sky it blended.
Chorus. A wintry moor ! &c.

I thought of deeds of darkness done
On that drear waste so lonely !
That there had perished many an one
For lack of succour only.
And I strode along with swifter pace,
A thrill o'er my bosom stealing—
Reaching at last my resting-place
With pleasurable feeling.
Chorus. A wintry moor ! &c.

—:o:—

A SEA SONG.

I COULD not as a landsman live
Pursuing his poor pleasure,
Each dull delight his course may give
Has nought in it to measure
With the true transport of the soul
O'er every sense prevailing,
When 'neath our feet the wild waves roll,
We o'er the ocean sailing.

Chorus. A sailor's life ! a sailor's life !
Upon the swelling sea,
Whose surges roar in ceaseless strife—
A sailor's life for me.

I love it, when in summer time
It lies, all ill-concealing,
And o'er its ripples come the chime
Of church-bells softly stealing.
I love it, when in grandest storm,
Like some great monster playing,
It spurns on high the vessel's form,
To mock it ere its slaying.

Chorus. A sailor's life ! &c.

Then, as our voyage is nearly gone,
And soon to port returning,
I love the waves which waft me on
To soothe my constant yearning.
And when the dear land is espied—
Dispelling all our sadness—
I bless the swiftly-flowing tide
Which bears me on to gladness.

Chorus. A sailor's life ! &c.

—:o:—

WHY DO I TRACE.

WHY do I trace
On your loved face
Such weary wealth of sorrow ?
Where late beamed joy
With nought to cloy,
Caused by the cares to-morrow.

The world I know
Is full of woe,
Encircled round with trouble,—
Yet merely sighs
And mournful eyes,—
But make our griefs redouble.

• Look up in haste !
Nor longer waste
Your life in weak bemoanings ;—
Cast grim Despair
From out his lair !
You've known enough of groanings.

Clouds ne'er o'ercast
With speed more fast
Because we thus are cheerful,—
They come apace
With frowning face
Full oft when we are tearful.

Then may we here
Spurn foolish fear,
Nor let fond Hope forsake us—
So having joy
With nought to cloy
Until the storm o'ertake us.

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

A PRACTICAL THEORY OF LIFE.

WHEN musing on the course of Life
How many seem its phases,
Yet every one of them is rife
With trebly-tangled mazes.

And though our prospects all are fair,
A scene made for enjoying—
Some canker-worm intrudeth there
Our perfect bliss destroying.

One man is strong and hath delight
Merely in Life's possessing,—
But pinching Poverty's bleak blight
Marreth his every blessing.

Another's wealth and friends agree
To lavish pleasures on him,
Yet look, alas, ! 'tis clear to see
Disease's curse upon him ;

Disease—for which weak human skill
Gives scant alleviation,—
He doomed to dread Existence still
Despite his smiling station.

A third has pulse of purest health
Which yields him nought save gladness,
But private griefs amid his wealth,
Impart a sense of sadness.

If we the daily deeds recite
Which form Life's *present* measure,
The *wrong* preponderates o'er the *right*,
And suffering over pleasure.

And thus whate'er our lot may be,
Our life is but a bubble,
Blown from some bleak and cruel sea
By the tornado Trouble.

Ah! what a mystery is this!
And yet if we revolve it,
Perchance we may not muse amiss,
But find a clue to solve it.

It oft appears absurd to believe
In a God of infinite kindness,
Who, seeming paradox, can leave
Us in such woe and blindness.

In perfect Goodness—omnipotent Power,
Permitting Evil to enter
Its fair dominions, and to shower
Such griefs on Man, their centre,

But if we accept the sceptic view
Denying a God and Life's fruition—
What do we gain e'en were that true?
For it is merely demolition.

Of many hopes which Man holds dear
Of a swiftly-coming morrow,
When we shall know with joy sincere
No sense of sin or sorrow.

Without revealing to our sight
A future fair and clearer:
Nay, leaving all in deepest night—
Far darker, lone and drearer.

For we still must bear the woes of Life
With the longings which oft come o'er us,
Whilst seeing no rest beyond its strife,
Save nothingness before us.

While a Heavenly hope amid our woe
Will cheer our Life's endeavour,
And yield us nought save good, although
At death it may fly for ever.

Thus, even though we set aside
Religion's *proofs* completely
It gives more joy our minds to guide
Till, apprehending meetly,—

That doubtless though upon the Earth
Our path is oft perplexing,
Its lack of love and chastened mirth
Our spirits sorely vexing—

There must exist a place—which gained
Through faith and strong endeavour,
What seems unjust will be explained,
Or rectified for ever:—

That there's a God who made Man's mind
With certain comprehension,
But yet Who has seen fit to bind
Its limits of extension.

(Thus human Reason's utmost sphere
Of thought is reached full early ;
And thus to us men's lots appear
So often dealt unfairly.)

Who also deemed it best for Man
Here to experience sadness,
As training for a higher plan
Of grandly growing gladness:—

That Life's dark mysteries but transcend
Not *contradict* our reason,
And so when earthly life shall end
There comes a sun-lit season.—

When with enlarged God-given powers
And intellects commanding,
One bliss of Heaven's bright halcyon hours
Shall be the understanding

Of problems which distressed the sage
Of deepest skill and learning,
But now that we have burst our cage
Are easy of discerning,—

While "themes with which we cannot cope"
Fade 'neath our Heavenly vision,
"And Earth's worst frenzies marring hope
Will mar *not* Hope's fruition."

—:0:—

EVENING THOUGHTS.

It was evening, and sadness
Around me was cast—
For rejoicing and gladness
Too swiftly were past.
Then methought with deep anguish,
In Life's dreary day,
All my loved ones must languish
And wither away.

Ah ! how futile each token
Of love given here,
Merely made to be broken
When friendships grow sere ;
Though sweet youth's summer morning
Dawned balmy and bright,
Yet our sorrow soon scorning,
It darkened to night.

Thus in bitter bewailing
I poured forth my grief,
When this glad hope prevailing
Gave richest relief :
As the blossoms of May-time
Must fade and grow sere,
Ere the ripe Autumn gay time
Of fruit can appear ;—

So Love's bright buds immortal
Must seemingly die,
Ere within Heaven's portal
They blossom on high,
In fruition for ever
To each constant soul,
Who through faithful endeavour
Gains Life's glorious goal.

I WONDER WHEREFORE.

"I WONDER wherefore?" is the soul-stirred cry
Which wells up from the depths of human hearts
In every sphere of life. From lowly homes
And princely palaces—from hermits' nooks
And seething crowds—from youth and riper age
And longest length of years—from rich and poor,
From all who have the manliness to think.
In health or sickness—happiness or woe—
'Mid Life's momentous moments or its trifles,
Which cause full oft profoundest musings. This
Incessant questioning is surely meant
As greatest food for hope, a token given,
That notwithstanding its abyss of sin,—
Within Man's soul abide the germs of good.

—:o:—

THOUGHT-LINKS.

MYSTERIOUS are the links that firmly bind
Our trains of thought together. First we brood
On some small trivial matter—tiny germ
Of somewhat grander musings—then we find
A thread is woven with our thought, and lo
It leads to higher themes!—vast vistas new
For serious contemplation:—and we gain
Sublimest heights, while God-reflected thoughts
Transcending Reason flood our human mind.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF FREQUENT FAILURE.

IN youth's bright morning hours of buoyant life
Grand contemplations often fill the mind
With noblest aspirations. While it seems
To us, as yet scarce touched by sordid care
And blighting prejudice, quite possible
Through our unaided efforts to attain
Some lustrous goal which glitters in our sight :
A goal which when 'twas won would benefit
The Universal Brotherhood of Man.
But as the years roll on we find the dream
Less easy of fulfilment,—for we feel
Our ardour less intense, while weary feet
Glide gently into the poor old-world groove
We so despised of yore,—and we are fain
To use fast-failing energy in strife
'Gainst daily troubles : higher aims forgotten.

—:o:—

A SONG OF COMFORT.

WE feel not always sadness—there are seasons
When the heart beats in ecstasies of joy,
Times when our thoughts of sorrow seem but
treasons
Which Truth destroy.

We feel not always daily cares and troubles,—
And sometimes e'en life-griefs appear no more ;
All gone as on a lake the rain-drop bubbles
When showers are o'er.

We feel not always that our hopes are blighted,
They oftentimes a glad fruition gain,
And we perceive the Good are aye requited
Who conquer pain.

We should not always grieve, each tribulation
Is sent to purify and raise the soul,
And fit it for its glorious destination :
An Heavenly goal.

—:o:—

PASSION.

BLIND passion ever proves a maddening power
Enthroned within us—a sin-garnered dower
Of quenchless loves and longings—a fierce storm
Breaking the beauteous boughs, where sheltered
warm

Repose, like unfledged nestlings, Life's chief joys.
Its wave sweeps o'er the soul and swift destroys
Our store of peace—what years of labour cost
Perchance by one false step for aye is lost.

SOLITUDE.

WHILST 'mid the throng,
Which restless moves along
With eager footsteps o'er the earth,
But few their noblest thoughts have known,
Most often when alone
Come thoughts of worth.

It needs the balm
Of soul-restoring calm
To purge the mind of Life's alloy ;
Thus yielding back Man's highest power,
His blessed pristine dower,
Of peace and joy.

And thus do men,
With keen enraptured ken,
Their grandest themes fruition give
In solitude. Truth seems to them,
A more resplendent gem
While so they live.

—:o:—

TRUE INSPIRATION.

TRUE inspiration ever seems,
By causing passion-pain,
To purify the poet's dreams,
And elevate his strain.

The common thought, the hackneyed rhyme,
Its touch can glorify,
Till men con o'er the dulcet chime
And scarce such faults descry.

And thus it is though oft we find
Imperfect chords like these
Within the works of a master-mind
That rarely they displease.

Whereas though versifiers gain
A smooth melodious roll,—
Their grandest stanzas flow in vain
Nor stir the secret soul.

—:o:—

THE PHILOSOPHY OF OUR FEELINGS.

'Tis strange that what seems grief to-day
Should bring us bliss to-morrow,—
That present joy should pass away
And be in future sorrow.

Yet of events we ever find
This the unvarying measure,—
According to our mood of mind
They yield us pain or pleasure.

SCATTERED THOUGHTS..

WHEN difficulties cross your path,
As certainly they must—
Resist them stedfastly, and they
Will crumble into dust.

* * * *

It is not well to yield too far
To grief, for soon a gleam
Of joy may come. Things sometimes are
Much better than they seem.

* * * *

How often though the sterile ground,
Despite the farmer's care,
Yields little grain, the weeds are found
In rank profusion there :

And thus 'tis also with the mind
From which small good proceeds,
For springing thence we ever find
The greatest crop of weeds.

* * * *

How oft men's quiet deeds from day to day
With true fidelity their minds display,—
As frequently a lake when calm and clear
Reflects with strictest truth the landscape near.

* * * *

Oh, vaunted seats of Mirth and Health,
Lulled Luxury and Ease
Amid your wealth Woe works by stealth,
Oft doing what he please.

* * * *

Ah, if men would ponder often
On the misery they give,
Surely then their hearts would soften,
They less carelessly would live.

* * * *

Let it be our firm endeavour,
Voyaging o'er Life's changeful sea,
To be glad and cheerful ever
And from needless gloom be free.

Satisfied if only showing
Even though all else depart,
All the happiness that's flowing
From a calm contented heart.

* * * *

Love is an under-current flowing on
And permeating all our human life,—
And thus it is that Poesy has power
Because its chiefest theme is always Love.

* * * *

Speed on then, true poet, with constancy still,
See thy goal is before thee, thy mission fulfil;
Point men's eyes ever higher, not think on thy toil,
Till in safety and rest thou shalt measure thy spoil.

THE HAWTHORN SPRAY.

ENRAPTURED with the beauties which
Bright Spring spreads o'er the land,
A little maiden and a boy
Are walking hand in hand.

In gladsome tones they gaily talk,
Nor think of coming care,
The proud boy plucks a hawthorn bud
To deck the girl's fair hair.

"Now let this spray a token be,"
He merrily exclaims,
"That in the years to come we know
Nought else save mutual aims.

"For spotless 'tis ; a symbol meet
Of this our treaty pure ;
So may our compact bring us bliss,
And evermore endure."

* * * * *

Now many years have wearily
And slowly sped away,
But still these two are true of heart,
As on that dear dead day.

And so together oft again
Amid the spring-tide's glow
They walk, rememb'ring thankfully,
Their love-pledge long ago.

A pledge which did not prove in vain,
And never once was slighted ;
For after tedious years of toil
In joy they are united.

—:o:—

A MOTHER'S LOVE.

A MOTHER's love is ever fondly kind,
From sinful dross of selfishness refined ;
In infant years it is a tender guide
To keep us safe from harm on every side ;
And when our cherished childhood's days are
passed,
It nerves us to endure the world's rough blast.

Its mellowed memory is with us still,
In joy or sorrow, happiness or ill,
And like some beauteous flower of growth
sublime
Transplanted for awhile to this chill clime,
It sheds its sweetest fragrance on our way,
Reviving drooping hearts in Life's dark day.

PARTING WORDS.

How oft the parting words of loved ones dear
Are cherished fondly all our lifetime here,
And Memory in calm reflection's hour,
Recalls them to the mind with vivid power :
And frequently most bitterly we feel
The impotence of Time our grief to heal.

Ah ! tender parting words, how soon is felt
Your influence the hardest heart to melt—
And as a babe upon its mother's breast
Is soothed unconsciously to quiet rest,
So gradually it steals o'er each sad soul,
And holds our feelings in its firm control.

—:o:—

HASTENING HOMEWARD.

I.

EACH moment nearing fast her home,
A ship is cleaving through the foam,—
Home ! ah, how sweet to those
Who in strange lands have absent been,
But still recalling each loved scene—
Their heart with rapture glows.
Thus there is boundless joy on board,
And jocundly with one accord

Are all prepared to land ;
For when this last long night is done
Their hopes rise with the morrow's sun,—
 Their haven is at hand.
Some sense-o'erstrainèd cannot sleep,
And through the watches wakeful keep,—
 Longing for dawn of light ;
The deck is paced by dauntless men,
The night is dark, save now and then
 When stars appear in sight.

II.

What was that crash ! that dismal sound
Which echoes through the darkness round—
 That sharp soul-stricken scream ?
The glance doth on confusion fall,
Those on the deck are wild, and all
 Is like a dreadful dream.
The barque has struck not far from shore,
But boisterously the billows roar,
 Along a rock-bound bay ;
Two boats are manned to gain the strand,
And struggling hard to put to land
 Pull through the blinding spray,
Leaving the rest to face their fate as best they
 may.

III.

The scene so lately still and calm
Seems nothing now save loud alarm,
 And dread and direful woe—
One sight of sorrow meets the eye
 On deck or down below.
While wind and seething waters vie,
 In working ill around,
Like sorcerers resolved to try
 Their secret arts profound.
Shrill shrieks are heard on every side,
And none now aid nor seek to guide
 The mad unresting crowd,
Who, scarce aware of what they do,
Pace passionately the deck ; a few
Murmur a prayer heartfelt and true,
Or bitter moans—or curses too
 In accents lewd and loud.

IV.

Down in a cabin lies a child
Heedless of death or tumult wild,
With blissful dreams by sleep beguiled :
A man reclines, removed a space,
 Scarce entered middle life—
Yet in whose face you well may trace
 Sad signs of care and strife.

V.

Now to the infant's side he springs
And very speedily he brings,
His charge from down below.
He casts one glance upon the storm,
Then tightly grasps the tiny form—
Nor shrinking seems to know.

VI.

His thoughts revert to long ago,
When fragile as this little child
A mother's love upon him smiled
As it assuaged each infant woe:—
And taught him to be true and brave
In this weak world of sordid strife,
And e'en to gladly part with life
Did it perchance another save.
And prays that though they may not meet
In this strange world of care,
They yet may have reunion sweet
Where all is bright and fair.

VII.

Then from the ship without delay
Through the wild waves he cleaves his way,
Needing surpassing strength
And dauntless courage thus to dare
To hold his burden and to bear
A swim of such a length.

The waters round him ruthless roll,
He well-nigh loses all control—
 Yet still he struggles on ;
And clasping to his breast the child,
He grapples with the billows wild
 Till strength is almost gone.

VIII.

Now see ! his task is nearly o'er,
If he can swim a few lengths more
They surely reach the wished-for shore ;
Brief moments now their fate will show
Whether it be of weal or woe.

IX.

Perceiving this he shapes his course
 Straight onward to the land,
Yet with each stroke makes less the force
 Which he can still command.
But all seems well—an instant more
Will see them safely on the shore.

X.

Sudden a gasp—a gurgling sound—
 A short convulsive groan,—
And nothing now is heard around
 Save the fierce storm alone.

For he has sunk to rise no more,
Exhausted with the conflict sore.
And as a rain-drop falling on a lake
Ripples its surface, yet can scarcely break
The depths beneath, so softly thus sinks he
Into the Ocean of Eternity.

—:o:—

A SUMMER SCENE.

BRIGHT beams of sunlight gild the lawn,
And the whole landscape seems as drawn
From some enchanter's treasure ;—
The songsters carol loud and clear,
Ah, how I dearly love to hear
Their sweet melodious measure.

And while I loiter 'neath the trees,
Delicious perfumes by the breeze,
Are wafted from the hay-field ;
Where village urchins pleasure court,
And making round the ricks their sport,
Transform it to a play-field.

Must this fair vision fade away ?
It must—and for its death to-day
I feel a sense of sorrow ;
But gladness comes to fill its place,
When Hope reminds with smiling face—
" 'Twill live again to-morrow."

SUMMER SORROW.

EACH season hath its sadness—and for me
 Summer not least of all. I know not why,
 But though its sylvan beauty soothes my soul
 Into delicious reveries ; while birds,
 Discoursing music, fill my dreamy mind
 With melodies, and thoughts, and deep delight,
 I never felt before—yet still there lurks
 Within my heart a strange unfathomed grief,
 Which, e'en amid harsh Autumn's ravages,
 Or grim old Winter's storm, I rarely feel.

—:o:—

A SUMMER EVENING IN THE WOODS.

How beautiful the forest looks to-night,
 The trees just moving in the still calm air :
 And very many of the birds delight
 In warbling forth their notes without a care.
 The graceful boughs which erst were gaunt
 and bare
 Have donned their fairest dress ; the insects
 keep
 Up low, soft, dreamy murmurs everywhere :
 But in the woodland glades, so dark and
 deep,
 Save but for these few sounds, all nature seems
 to sleep.

The stars come slowly out, and very soon
The summer day in peace and calmness ends ;
And by-and-by, as rises slow the Moon,
Her light with splendour on the scene
descends :
While she amid the clouds her pathway wends
Majestic as a queen, and they stand near
Like courtiers round her throne ; each object
lends
Fresh beauty to the landscape dim, yet clear
Enough to let its wondrous loveliness appear.

Scenes like to this exert a mighty power
To soothe us, and to cause our minds to
stray,—
If only for a brief and transient hour,—
From weary cares which fill them day by day ;
And soon our thoughts fly swiftly far away
To some bright reminiscence of the past,
And for a while engrossed with it they stay ;
And when our reverie is done at last,
How deeply we regret such moments fly so fast !

—:o:—

TWILIGHT THOUGHTS.

How charming is the summer eve, removed
from cities far,
Where Nature's spotless loveliness nought inter-
venes to mar ;

Where wild-rose and convolvulus are woven in
the hedge,
And buttercups and foxgloves gay rise from the
brooklet's edge,
Where zephyrs waft their sweetest scents adown
the waving wood,
And the soothing songs of Nature's choir impel
us to intrude:—
When shadows creep across our path, and Day is
well-nigh dead,
'Tis then that Summer ever seems her glamour
best to spread.

Where in this weary world can more of perfect
peace be found,
Than when on such a scene we gaze, in sympathy
around?
And often will some fair wild flowers more truly
touch the heart
Than the resplendent trophies of rare botanic art;
The sweet-brier, which perchance unseen, pours
perfume on the air,
I would not barter for what proved the florist's
proudest care;
I'll leave the Rich their bowers of art in which to
rear rare flowers,
Enough for me each common plant in Summer's
gloaming hours.

THE HEART'S SUMMER.

SWEET is the noon of a summer day
While low the bees are humming,
And the village sounds seem far away
When through the woodlands coming.

Sweet are the hours of a summer night
When the diamond dews are falling,
And dreams come with the fading light,
Soft, soothing, and enthralling.

Sweet are the tones of a friendly voice,
Speaking sympathy in sorrow,
Whilst bidding us once more rejoice,
And from Love's store-house borrow.

Sweet is the wondering world's applause
When fame at last hath found us,
And (guerdon for toil in a righteous cause)
Flings victory's wreath around us.

But sweeter far is a heart at rest,
A heart ne'er soured by sadness—
Which throbs within a blissful breast
With a God-imparted gladness.

A LESSON IN THE GLOAMING.

ONE even of a summer's day
I walk scarce whither knowing,
Save by a river's side I stray,
Where balmy winds are blowing.

'Tis the loved hour of twilight's close,
When o'er the landscape stealing,
The last faint ray of sunset glows,
Its beauty half revealing.

Rich foliage hides the rippling stream
From the fair view completely,
And gently as in halcyon dream,
Its murmur softly, sweetly,

Comes zephyr-borne, as on I move
With light heart void of sadness,
Nor caring what to-morrow prove,
So that to-day be gladness.

Sudden is heard the plash of oars,
A sense of pleasure bringing,—
While plaintively a rower pours
His soul thus out in singing :

In Summer's choicest day,
When round each fragrant spray
The blithesome breezes stray—

Ah, what delight !
But brightest days contain
The seeds of future pain,
And Winter comes again,
Their bliss to blight !

Not so the joys of *Mind*,
Unfathomed, unconfined,
They soar and leave behind
Trammels of Earth :—
They teach Mankind to face
Both honour and disgrace,
And gain at last the Place
Which gave them birth.

The boat sweeps on,—the words depart
In cadences alluring,—
But they have pierced my flippant heart,
And left a mark enduring.

—:o:—

MEADOW MUSINGS.


While tramping with purest of pleasure
The pathways grass-grown of the fields,
The thought that will come without measure
Is strange as the fruit that it yields.

We dream that on spot we are standing
To gaze on the glorious view—
Perchance some stern Druid commanding
Performed his orisons due.

Ere vengeful and fierce at his foeman,
And eager for spoil and applause,—
He ventured to meet the bold Roman
To fight in his dear country's cause.

Some Saxon it may be with sadness
Here mourned the mailed Norman's advance,
And on morrow ended his madness
At point of the enemy's lance.

Perchance after great baron's wassail—
In days when such doings were rife,
With feudal foes here fought each vassal
In bitter inglorious strife.



Or the Roundhead recounted the glory
Of routing the gay Cavalier,
Nor wept, while reciting the story,
For former companions a tear.

And still as the swiftly-winged Ages
Press on with impetuous pace,
The fools of the Earth and its sages
May pause for a while in this place.

Then darting away will commingle
In the turmoil with which Life is fraught,
And never again will they single
This spot out for care or for thought.

—:o:—

FLOWER-GATHERING.

Two merry children in a meadow see,
With faces all aglow with Childhood's glee—
While finding fragrant flowerets here and there
To weave into a chaplet fresh and fair :
Till of the sweet wild flowers they gaily make
A guerdon to reward the pains they take.

So 'tis methinks amid Life's tedious toil,
And sordid strife and harassing turmoil ;

As surely as we seek, we pleasures find,
Which bring kind Hope to cheer each mournful
mind :

And our attempts to seize them oft repay
By showering blessings on our weary way.

—:o:—

GARDEN MUSINGS.

AH, what a sadness wells within our soul
Whilst loitering in garden where erewhile,
We used to hold sweet interchange of thought
With a dearly lovèd lost one ; and to know
Such days are dead for ever. That for us,
Though May-time blossoms make the orchard
trees

Most beauteous to behold, and every sense
In bliss is saturated by the wealth
Of Nature's charms profusely spread around,
There yet remains enthroned within our heart
A deep, dull void, which nought on earth can fill.

—:o:—

A COMPARISON.

THE landscape bright is very fair to see,
And all around the birds are blithely singing ;
And yonder to that venerable tree,
Tenaciously the ivy's boughs are clinging.

But soon the tree is felled and ta'en away,
And each slight tendril from its trunk is taken ;
And now the ivy's beauty will decay,
Bereft of its support, lone, and forsaken.

So frequently it happens with us all,
Round some lov'd object twin'd is our affection,
But soon 'tis snatched away beyond recall,
And leaves us nothing save its recollection.

Then deepest grief and anguish rend the breast,
And oft we seem to hear a voice repeating,
" Our life is but a shadow at the best,
And nought abides, but all is brief and fleeting."

—:o:—

AN EXHORTATION.

HOPE on, though dark appears the way,
Perchance 'twill alter soon ;
And change as does a cheerless day,
When sunshine comes at noon.

Hope on, and hoping will impart
New strength to bear the pain ;
The efforts of a dauntless heart
Can never prove in vain.

Hope on, and yield not to despair,
Though gloom enshroud the way ;
For surely ends all earthly care,
At dawn of Heavenly day.

—:o:—

QUIETUDE.

“QUIETUDE, O quietude,”
My soul is sadly sighing ;
For thee, in a mournful mood,
I ceaselessly am crying ;
But a voice murmurs softly clear,
“ *True* quietude is never here.”

Quietude, O quietude,
Come while Life's waves I'm breasting,
Bringing with thee all things good,
Pure peace, and joy, and resting,—
Yet still the voice—“ No, never here
Can *perfect* quietude appear.”

Quietude, O quietude,
Grant me a single token
That sometimes Life's conflict rude
By perfect peace is broken ;
But a voice whispers in my ear,
“ *True* quietude is never here.”

Quietude, O quietude,
 Mine earthly course is ending,
Come, and now within me brood,
 Each sin-stained fetter rending,
Breathes then the voice with silver sound,
"In *Heaven* true quietude is found."

—:o:—

A LAMENT.

"Not for me Life's varied pleasures,
 Sad and lonely is my fate;
Gone are all its fancied treasures,
 Leaving nought to compensate."

Thus our weary heart is crying
 Frequently in sore distress,
And while sighing, Hope is dying,
 She our greatest happiness.

Then a voice comes murmuring sweetly,
 "Soul, accept God's wise decree;
Do so gladly and completely,
 Even though 'tis hard for thee."

—:o:—

— LORD TEACH US TO PRAY.”

LUX XI. L.

A ~~last~~ *enigma* is our life
 Without Thy guiding ray;
 But Thou who wilted calm its strife,
 By teaching us to pray.

Prayer! true solution of the fears
 And doubts along our way;
 Whose influence coming, sweetly cheers—
 What bliss it is to pray!

So when its mysteries distress,
 And gloom enshrouds Life's day,
 We plead that Thou wouldst make them less,
 By teaching us to pray.

Dark is the path of weary woe,
 Whilst in Earth's night we dwell,
 Yet prayer will prove a sun to show
 That still Thou doest well.

—:0:—

IN TENEBRÆA LUX.

'Tis night, and darkness as a pall
 Enwraps the sable scene,
 Nor doth one glimmering ray recall
 Where sunshine erst hath been.

Till the Moon peereth 'neath a cloud
'Mong floods of borrowed light,
And piercing through the landscape's shroud,
Dispels the gloom of night.

So 'tis in life ; 'mid deepest woe,
Oft drawing nigh despair,
God-borrowed beams alone still show
That joy abideth there.

—:o:—

A FATHER'S LAST WORDS.

COME, my children, gather near me,
For my sight grows dim and weak ;
And your presence helps to cheer me
Even though I scarce can speak.

Yet while earthly life is closing,
And its end seems very nigh,
In my Saviour's arms reposing,
I can never dread to die.

Death to me is but the portal
Of a pure and blissful life ;
Life unchanging and immortal,
Void of sorrow, sin, and strife.

How unworthily the burden
Of the Cross I used to bear,
Yet God giveth me the guerdon
Of the ransomed's Crown to wear.

Oh ! accept His proffered favour,
Take the Saviour for your own,
And He will not let you waver
Till we meet around His Throne.

Radiant and full of gladness
Shines his face with Heavenly light,
And without one sigh of sadness
Calm his spirit takes its flight.

—:o:—

A MORNING MEDITATION.

Now the black night will speedily be gone,
And the delicious dawning draweth near—
Charming each sense, while calmly gazing on
The freshly budding beauty which is here;
Almost a paradise doth soon appear,
Dowered with a glittering flood of dewdrops
bright ;
As the Sun's radiance from a higher sphere
Seems to produce, e'en by its gladsome sight,
In careworn human hearts a wonderful delight.

Ah ! who at sunrise could be aught save glad !
For 'tis a prototype of perfect day—
When we shall wake to bliss, no longer sad,—
And feel the glowing God-begotten ray,
Which bids us fling aside all fears which may
Still cleave to us ; and with enraptured soul
Speed to the land where trouble flees away
Before His presence, that long-looked-for goal,
Where all Earth's weary wounds for ever are
made whole.

—:o:—

THE WARBLERS' MISSION.

ONE bright day, sad and weary,
I wandered the fields,
Which often when dreary,
Much happiness yields,—
Yet not softest of sighing
Of sweet summer breeze,
Not the beauties near lying
My burden could ease.

But a bird's note of gladness
Clear borne on the air,
Changed my sense of strange sadness
And sorrowful care ;—

And full soon o'er me stealing,
In place of my grief,
Came a rapturous feeling.
Of peace and relief.

Then I wondered if pinions
Were given birds thus,
To work 'mid God's dominions,
A mission to us ;—
Of shedding, midst sadness,
Rejoicing and love,
And, through soothing and gladness,
To guide us above.

So perchance they flew ever
Devoting their days
With ceaseless endeavour
To carolling praise :—
As true types, though terrestrial,
Till song-time be o'er,
Of the angels celestial
Who chant and adore.

MIDNIGHT MUSINGS.

THE moonbeams' pure brightness
Has entered my room,
Thus shedding some lightness
Where late all was gloom.
Yet it leaves much uncertain
Which Day would make clear,
For the Night's darksome curtain
Still lies dim and drear.

So, methinks, as in sadness
I restlessly toss,
'Tis with dreams of past gladness
Our spirits that cross :—
Though oftentimes cheering
Our souls by their light,
We by their appearing
Perceive our deep night.

—:O:—

" 'TIS GONE."

" 'Tis gone," with mournful voice we say,
When some great joy departs ;
And we pursue our weary way
With sad and heavy hearts.

"Tis gone," with gladsome voice we cry,
 When grief or pain is o'er :—
 And all the prospect far and nigh
 Is brighter than before.

Seems it not strange that keenest woe
 This phrase can thus express ;
 And yet be often used to show
 The highest happiness ?

—:O:—

A LIFE'S EPITOME.

A COTTAGE home : a peaceful place
 Where Sorrow hides her dreaded face ;
 Husband and wife, a happy pair,
 Who thankfully Life's blessings share ;
 And living far from towns' turmoil,
 They simply crave a "leave to toil !"

* * * *

A workhouse full of reckless din,
 Where gladness rarely enters in :
 A dying man now sinking fast,
 Yet doubtless conscious to the last.
 His senses steeped in wrathful woe,
 Such as alone the poor can know ;
 When 'spite of struggles long and brave,
 Their death but fills a pauper's grave.

ACROSTIC.—COWPER.

CALM and clear-toned the music of thy song,
Of depths diviner than to bards belong,
Who scale Parnassian heights with sordid aim :—
Pure as a ray of brightly-flashing flame
Eradiating from Truth's torch to show
Rash Man a heavenward path amid Life's woe.

—:O:—

ACROSTIC.—KIRKE WHITE.

KIND and true-hearted was thy youthful life,
In every manly attribute most rife ;
Rich in a mind rare cultured, and which sought
Knowledge with pursuit keen, and ever thought
Each effort well repaid that learning brought.

Wise thought on such as thee doth cheer the
heart,
Having their course before us as a chart,
In which is shown a way whereby each one,
Though sore the toil and scorching be Life's sun,
Elated shall receive God's glad " Well done."

—:O:—

A LIFE-CHRONICLE.**I.**

LONG years ago a peasant boy
Lives as his widowed mother's joy,
Her cherished firstborn son ;
For though her love the others share,
They are but babes—for them the care
Of life has scarce begun.
While the brave brother manfully
Strives stedfastly to gain their bread,
Resolved to do as well as he
Is able in their father's stead.

II.

He little learning could acquire,
Except when sitting at the fire,
When work was done, on a wintry night ;
But then it was his chief delight
To linger o'er some well-conned page,
Dowered with the wisdom of the sage.
His thought for every lesser one,
How charming 'twas to view ;
And often would he join the fun
As leader of the crew.

Yet sometimes when apart from man,
 Upon the lone hill-side,
His future anxiously would scan,
 And long for one to guide
His steps to higher spheres of life,
If even through severest strife.

III.

But soon his mood would grow more gay,
Like lark which soars at dawn of day ;
And then before his eyes would play
Visions of regions far away.
Yet calmly he resolved to stay
 Till some brief years were o'er.
And then a fond farewell to say,
 And leave his native shore,
Boldly to seek his fortune there,
And never yield him to despair.

* * * *

IV.

The time now comes to say farewell,
 That word how full of sadness !
And yet for aught which one may tell
 The harbinger of gladness.
At least to think so sore he tries,
When with stout heart but wistful eyes

He bids them not to grieve,
Saying they soon shall have surprise
Which they will scarce believe.
Then gently doth bright dreams unfold,
Of his return, with wealth untold.

* * * * *

v.

Long years have passed, and now once more
He views again his native shore ;
Nor has his stay been spent in vain,
For ere he crosses now the main
He has of gold an ample store,
And better still a well-earned name
For honest worth, with nought of shame.
His now indeed a bright career,
In which each blessing given Man here
Is granted to him, as if sent
As guerdon for his past content.
While patiently 'mid much toil he
Still struggling strove 'gainst poverty ;
And succouring the deep distressed
Proved now the passion of his breast.
So when at length in death he sleeps
Many a mourner for him weeps.

A DREAM OF LONG AGO.

A DREAM of youth comes o'er me—
A dream of long ago,
When life was light before me,
Nor knew the taint of woe.

'Tis of a sun-lit village
Built by the bright sea's strand,
With widespread fields in tillage
Stretching on every hand,—

Save on one side where moorland
The landscape closes in,
Which though men deemed it poor land
Was dowered with blooming whin.

Here there were boundless pleasures
For me, a town-bred boy;
Here first I found the treasures
That country-folk enjoy.

Great was my bliss bird-nesting,
When butterflies I sought;
Or when in quiet resting
On turf with fragrance fraught.

Its charms indeed were legion,
With its odours of wild flowers ;
It seemed a fairy region
To spend the halcyon hours.

Once, with a strange emotion,
I found a blackbird's brood,
And watched the dam's devotion,
Yet dreaded to intrude.

I loved this moorland dearly,
With its spots for rest and play—
And in my day-dreams clearly
Still see it day by day.

How sweet looked the small river—
Which gave the spot its name—
As its wavelets used to quiver
Beneath the sunset's flame,

Which dyed them with a lightness
That soon must disappear ;
Fit emblem of the brightness
Which human life hath here.

What sport to watch the fishers
As they left their homes at morn—
Surrounded with well-wishers,
Holding dread and fear in scorn.

And how gladsome were the greetings
When they returned at night,
And merry were the meetings,
For faces all were bright.

Life here had much of gladness
Despite its dull day's round,—
And less of care and sadness
Than oft in cities found.

How great was my diversion,
(I was but eight years old)—
When I went a short excursion,
A cart my chariot bold.

And as thus on I travelled
'Mid balmy summer air—
Life's skein for me was ravelled
With bliss in place of care.

I saw them cutting fuel
To feed their wintry fire,
And, ah, I thought it cruel,
When bidden to retire.

How pleasant the postman meeting,
With his merrily-sounding horn,
And his grave yet gladsome greeting
Bestowed on me each morn.

While the village people ever,
 Though rude and unrefined,
 To me seemed good and clever
 Because they all were kind.

Ah, vision calm and cheering !
 Soul-soothing none the less,
 Despite the callous sneering
 Cold cynics may profess.

Thy memories shall not perish
 Whate'er betide of woe—
 Yes, evermore I'll cherish
 This dream of long ago.

—:o:—

APOSTROPHE TO AN INK-BOTTLE IN AN HOTEL COFFEE-ROOM.

'Tis strange to think how oft your aid
 Has been invoked by men ;
 And what a confidence was made
 Of secrets to you then !

Prosaic words of business life,
 By you have been expressed ;
 And you have told the sorest strife
 That burns in lover's breast.

Perchance a little girl or boy
Employs you for a letter,
About new scenes, or of their joy
When loosed from school's firm fetter.

A husband forced, though leal and true,
In distant land to dwell,
To his loved wife indites by you,
A tender last farewell.

And sometimes too a seeming "swell"
Enters, and half afraid, he
Impresses you for a *billet doux*,
On business rather "shady."

"Commercials" pen a dazzling dream
Of greatly grown connection;
And next you aid the swelling stream
Of filial affection,

Which flows in sadness as a son,
From his fond mother parted,
Grieves that his course, alas, has run
So far from whence it started.

And so all use you day by day,
In high or humble station;
Then each departs upon his way,
Feeling no obligation!

WAITING FOR THE DENTIST.

THOUGH many dismal years I've been
To dull old Care apprenticed,
The worst of the small woes I've seen
Is waiting for the dentist.

How dreary is the cheerless room
In which you bide his pleasure,
The very chairs seem steeped in gloom
And sorrow without measure.

As if so wild the waiter's grief,
So uncontrolled its swelling,—
That its fierce tide had sought relief
By deluging the dwelling.

What though of literature a store
Is lying on the table,
You only think the books a bore ;
To read you are unable.

What from the window, though, perchance,
You see forms full of graces,
They merely make you look askance,
And think how sore your face is.

On many chairs and sofas, too,
More martyrs round you languish,
You glance at them, they glance at you,
And give a groan of anguish.

You deem it hard their turn arrives
Before you in rotation,
Or they wax wrath that yours deprives
Their case of consolation.

You muse upon the ruthless wrench,
Which buys a tooth's departing—
Or how the stopping pangs to quench,
In which you may be starting.

No words your mood of mind express,
'Tis a state devoid of quiet,—
In which pain, pleasure, and distress
Mingle in hopeless riot.

Yes, though much sorrow one must know,
While to old Care apprenticed,
The greatest unheroic woe,
Is waiting for the dentist.

FLEETING SUNBEAMS.

How oft a word, a glance, a jest,
Piercing the veil its depths concealing,
Awakens joys within our breast
We had no thought again of feeling.

The prattle of a trustful child,
The gazing on a landscape pleasing,
Or on some vista grand and wild,
The soul its inspiration seizing.

The tones of a familiar air
Loved by us in Life's morn of gladness ;
But trifles these, yet still they share
Awhile in mitigating sadness.

Yet their impression dies away,
Leaving life drear as when it found us ;
Nay, drearer for the fickle ray
Illusively thus shed around us.

—:o:—

IMAGINATION'S HARVEST.

OH, how powerless we seem to secure Fancy's
dream,
Though before our rapt gaze it be floating ;
And to garner a mine of the rich gems that shine,
Yet are lost for the lack of our noting.

Thus in sickness sometimes, like strange musical
chimes,

Come sweet visions enchanting to meet us ;
But they pass from our sight like a bird in its
flight,
And are gone ere their gladness can greet us.

Then, if buoyant in health, they deny us their
wealth,

And leave us to commonplace duties,
Though with bliss Life is fraught we scarce
harbour a thought
Of their wondrous though swift-fleeting
beauties.

While oft in our mind when their traces we find,
We would pen their pure brilliance for others,
But the glories we see, though entrancing
they be,
Are as nought in the eyes of our brothers.



